Tea

Government implemented a Price Subsidy scheme to provide relief to the small growers of tea, reduced the excise duty on tea, increased the import duty on tea, restructed/rescheduled the loans outstanding in the tea sector from commercial banks, provided financial incentives to exporters, introduced the Tea Marketing Control Order, 2003 for greater tfansparency in the price discovery mechanism for tea etc.

Coconut

In order to ensure remunerative prices to coconut farmers for their produce. Govt, of India fixes Minimum Support Price (MSP) every year for milling copra and ball copra and undertakes price support operations if the price falls below MSP. The Coconut Development Board also encourages diversification of coconut products and value added products and its market promotion activities to stabilise the declining trend in the price of coconut.

Arecanut

For helping-arecanut farmers to get remunerative prices for their produce, Govt, of India implemented a Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) in Goa, Andaman and Nicobar islands and Karnataka.

Rubber

To safeguard the interest of the growers of rubber, Government has taken a number of measures which include market intervention operation through STC during 1997 to 2001, fixing and notifying the minimum price of rubber, continuing the ban on import of Natural Rubber even in the Quantitative Restrictions free regime and curbing surge in imports of Natural Rubber by enforcing quality standards formulated by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on imported rubber also and restricting import of Natural Rubber through two ports viz. Vishakhapatnam and Kolkata only.

Package to attract MNCs for Investment in NER

1091. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Govemment have prepared any new package under new

liberalization policy to attract multi-national companies to make investment in the North Eastern Region particularly in the State of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this respect for making investment in the Region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENIVIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) The Government have announced a New Industrial Policy and other concessions for the North-Eastern region including the State of Assam on 24th December, 1997. The Industrial Policy for the region aims at attracting investors by giving them the following incentives/concessions/ subsidies:—

(i) Excise and Income Tax exemptions for a period of 10 years.

(ii) Subsidies such as Transport Subsidy, Capital Investment Subsidy, Central Interest Subsidy and premium for Comprehensive Insurance Scheme.

(iii) Promoting infrastructure development through Schemes like Growth Centre of Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion and Integrated Infrastructure Development Centre (IIDC) of Ministry of Small Scale Industry.

(iv) A financial institution namely, North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFi) has been established as a Special Purpose Vehicle for development of the North-Eastern region and is the nodal agency for disbursement of subsidies in the region.

(c) Under the policy, there is no provision for Government investment/ funding. The Government provides facilities/incentives only, to encourage private entre-ireneurs to set up industries. Regular interactive meetings are held between Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion/State Governments/Industry Associations for resolving issues and removing bottlenecks. The initiative for setting up of industries rests with the private entrepreneurs.